

REMARKS

All of the claims have been limited to the use of zirconia particles. The last office action indicates that the use of zirconia particles would be obvious over the use of silica particles, alleged to have been taught in a cited reference.

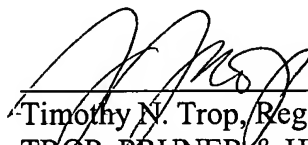
However, the attached Declaration from one of the inventors involved in the development points out that, at one point, the inventors contemplated using silica and that the performance of zirconia particles, relative to silica particles, was totally unexpected. In other words, there was no reason to believe that zirconia particles would have better thixotropy than silica particles.

Therefore, the use of zirconia particles is non-obvious over the use of silica particles and reconsideration of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Date:

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